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SENSITIVE
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LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS; DEPARTMENT FOR AF/C,
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [SOCI](#) [ASEC](#) [CD](#)

SUBJECT: CHAD'S LATEST "MADHI MOVEMENT" IN CENTRAL PART OF
THE COUNTRY CRUSHED BY SECURITY FORCES; AND EAC CONFIRMS
SITUATION IN CAPITAL NORMAL

11. (U) The Chad Government is reporting that its security forces crushed a violent religious extremist movement led by a self-proclaimed "Madhi" (spiritual leader) centered in the town of Kouni in south-central Chad, after peaceful efforts to dissuade the "Madhi" to moderate his rhetoric and threatening behavior failed.

12. (U) Last week, GOC security forces -- police and gendarmes -- confronted supporters of a small, possibly Shia sect after repeated threats by its leader, one Faki Ahmat Ismael Bischara, to launch a "holy war" against the government and after he refused to negotiate with religious authorities sent by the GOC to convince him to moderate his actions. Hundreds of religious students and local villagers armed with rocks, swords, and bows and arrows attacked Chadian security forces accompanying a GOC delegation to talk with "Madhi" Bischara, with chants accusing the government of being corrupt and un-Islamic. They demanded that the GOC adopt the "Madhi's" extremist views or face a "jihad" that would begin in Kouno and spread across Chad. Responding to the attack, security forces opened fire on the militants, killing seventy-two, women and children, and arresting 200 more, according to the GOC.

13. (SBU) The confrontation followed days of negotiation between the government and the Islamic sect, in which Faki Ahmat Ismael Bischara (the militant Madhi) rejected government requests to cancel his plan for a jihad. Minister of Interior Bachir announced on July 2 that Islamic centers country-wide would be investigated, and that four gendarmes had been killed in the fighting. The widely respected Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (which is linked to the GOC), who had negotiated on behalf of the government during this crisis, is due to address the country on the Kouno situation on July 3.

14. (SBU) On July 2, the High Council for Islamic Affairs Secretary General Alhadi Nahim spoke to Poloff about their negotiations with the religious sect.

15. (SBU) Embassy N'Djamena convened a core Emergency Action Committee on July 3 to confirm that the situation in the capital is normal and that the mission's current security posture was appropriate for normal activities and for a July 4 community event on the Chancery compound.

16. (SBU) This is not the first time a millennial religious movement has arisen in Chad, but we believe it may be the first to motivate its adepts to die for their beliefs. Embassy officers will be delving into this incident further

in order to assess its importance as a precedent for Chad's current and future political and social stability, as well as any possible impact on the safety and security of Americans in Chad.

NIGRO